

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: TOURISM & OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION COMMITTEE

DATE: APRIL 25, 2016

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: MERLINO
DICKINSON
CONOVER
SEEBER
SIMPSON
STROUGH
WOOD
BEATY
FRASIER
VANSELOW
LEGGET

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:
JOANNE CONLEY, TOURISM COORDINATOR
LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK
TANYA BRAND, GROUP TOUR PROMOTER
REPRESENTING THE ADIRONDACK CIVIC CENTER COALITION:
JEFF MEAD, GLENS FALLS CIVIC CENTER GENERAL MANAGER
DOUG KENYON, NYSPHSAA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT
DIRECTOR
GEORGE FERONE, ADIRONDACK CIVIC CENTER COALITION
BOARD OF DIRECTOR
KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
SARAH MCLENITHAN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD
SUPERVISORS MACDONALD
MONTESI
MCDEVITT
AMY BARTLETT, FIRST ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY
FRANK THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
MICHAEL SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER
GARY THORNQUIST, LAKE GEORGE RV PARK
LESLIE LOVELACE, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

Please note the following contains a summarization of the April 25, 2016 meeting of the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link: <http://www.warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2016/tourism/>

Mr. Merlino called the meeting of the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 10:31 a.m.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Ms. Seeber and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the Occupancy Tax Coordination agenda were distributed to the Committee members and a copy of same is on file with the meeting minutes.

Commencing the review of the Occupancy Tax Coordination agenda, privilege of the floor was extended to Michael Swan, Warren County Treasurer, who provided the Report on Revenues. Mr. Swan noted occupancy tax was down this year as compared to the same time last year but he believed that was a result of timing. He opined it could have been off due to bad weather and hoped it was only down 8-10% instead of 40% as the report showed. He stated the 2015 year-end balance for occupancy tax revenue collected was \$4 million and the occupancy tax fund balance was \$2,838,550.36, minus the \$1 million for operational funds, which left a balance of \$1.8 million in the reserve fund.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Jeff Mead, Glens Falls Civic Center General Manager, who gave an overview of the past events at the Civic Center and what upcoming events would be held. He stated that Vantage Point Church Service had signed a contract for next year to hold services at the Civic Center as well as the services they had this year. Mr. Mead apprised the Committee that upcoming venues planned for the summer were, four graduations, Newsboys (a Christian band),

Overtime Hockey Camp, George Thorogood and the Destroyers, and a couple of big shows to be announced on May 23, 2016. Mr. Mead presented a request for the ACCC's (Adirondack Civic Center Coalition) next funding distribution in the amount of \$100,000.

Motion was made by Mr. Vanselow, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to approve the disbursement as requested.

Mr. Merlino extended the privilege of the floor to Brian Reichenbach, County Attorney, who was asked to apprise the Committee whether occupancy tax proceeds could legally be used to help eradicate invasive species for public lakes in the County. Mr. Reichenbach stated the language of the law did not address what the funds could be used for apart from tourist activities; however, he said, it did address how the funds could be used for purposes directly related to activities. He explained, this meant the County could be subjected to a challenge if funds were used for invasive species. He mentioned in this case he would defend the County.

Next, Mr. Merlino proposed amending Resolution No. 618 of 2015 to award \$15,000 to Improv Records, Inc. for the Adirondack Independence Festival to be held September 30 - October 1st, 2016. He noted this event would replace "The Chill" event that was tentatively scheduled for the same dates but had been cancelled.

A discussion ensued following which a motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried by majority vote, with Ms. Seeber and Messrs Dickinson, Vanselow, and Conover voting in opposition, to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 20th Board Meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

There being no further Occupancy Tax Coordination business to discuss, privilege of the floor was extended to Joanne Conley, Tourism Coordinator, who distributed copies of the Tourism agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the agenda review, Ms. Conley presented a request to provide ratifying authorization to wave the GSA Rate requirements included in the travel policy for herself to attend the I Love New York Empire State Tourism Conference at the 1000 Islands Harbor Hotel, in Clayton, NY on May 1- 4, 2016.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the travel request and forward same to the Finance, Personnel & Higher Education Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Next, Ms. Conley requested authorization to appropriate \$25,000 from the Occupancy Tax Reserve, A.881, to Budget Code A.6417 470, Tourism-Occupancy, Contract to provide funding support for the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce & CVB, Inc. in its efforts to update and run the Exit 17 Information Center.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried unanimously to approve the request and forward same to the Finance, Personnel & Higher Education Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

A brief discussion ensued involving the technology at the Information Center and the improvements to the building that houses the Information Center.

Continuing to Pending Items, Ms. Conley stated her office had provided BBG&G Advertising Inc. with volumes of information such as travel reports and occupancy sales tax collections for review. She stated a representative from BBG&G would be here on May 6th and had provided an aggressive

timeline. Ms. Conley stated she and Peter Girard, Creative Director, hoped to have a preview of the new web site launched and available for next month's meeting, as well as the new television commercial and campaign for the summer in print, digital and media formats.

There being no further business to come before the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Ms. Wood, Mr. Merlino adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie Lovelace, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board